

# THE DIAL

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### A MEMOIR OF EMERSON.\*

The only fault that the reader is likely to find with these two handsomely bound and printed volumes is their brevity. Mr. Cabot disclaims, in the preface, any intention of attempting an adequate summary of Emerson's life and doctrines, merely aiming, in his function of literary executor, to offer to the public additional details and illustrations "that may fill out and define more closely the image of him they already have." In view of the fact that this image is to many of us extremely vague, and in some cases distorted, it is to be regretted that Mr. Cabot has not undertaken the more difficult and important task for which, as an occasional deviation from his path of simple narration shows, he is eminently qualified. However, we are indebted to him for an exceptionally interesting book, one that every American should procure and read without delay; and we trust that he may see fit to place us under increased obligation in the future.

Starting with a review of Emerson's ancestry, the author follows him through the progressive stages of his life, dwelling occa-

sionally upon the more salient points,—as his resignation of office at the Second Church, his connection with the New England Transcendentalism, his position with regard to the anti-slavery conflict, his final desertion of the pulpit for the lyceum, his visits to Europe, and his relations with eminent contemporaries. The narrative is interspersed with characteristic anecdotes, bits of journal extract and correspondence, and many flashes of the true Emersonian thought,—“news from the Em-pyrean,” as Carlyle says.

Emerson's intense spirituality was largely inherited. His forefathers were Calvinistic clergymen,—men who devoted themselves to the contemplation of a future life and the intricate problems of their logic-born system of theology with a zeal of which we of this age can form only a feeble conception. To them this world was but a halting-place; its affairs transitory—almost unworthy of attention; and in a calm certainty as to the future, they passed through life scarce coming in contact with what we are wont to term its realities. To his ancestors, as I have said, Emerson owed his intense spirituality; his remaining characteristic trait was certainly not due to heredity. We reflect that these spiritual-minded forefathers of his were pre-eminently men of creed and dogma. To them, the traditions of the church and the writings of the fathers were indisputable. All their criteria of truth were of the past; in their eyes the black-letter tomes setting forth the relentless deductions of Athanasius and Calvin were oracles whose sanctity it was lawful to vindicate by stake and faggot. What hidden forces, then, conjoined with them in producing Emerson as a resultant—Emerson the arch heretic, to whom the voices of the past were feebler than the faintest whisper of the present; whose religion was not of yesterday, but of to-day? His early training, moreover, was strictly within the lines of orthodoxy; although we are somewhat relieved to learn that the Puritan rigor of the household did not exclude Addison, Shakespeare, Pope, and other flesh and blood authors.

The bent of his mind at this period was largely influenced by an aunt, Mary Moody Emerson, an unbending Puritan in theory, with a lovable though sternly repressed tendency to philanthropy, of whom Emerson wrote, in words that suggest an odd flavor of Charles Lamb: “She tramples on the common humanities all day, and they rise as ghosts and torment her at night.” To this aunt he undoubtedly owed a large share of the pro-

\* A MEMOIR OF RALPH WALDO EMERSON. By James Elliot Cabot. In two volumes. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

found respect he always accorded to established religious observances, even when at variance with his own views. A letter to her when he was about ten years old gives us an idea of their household *régime*. He writes :

"In the morning I rose, as I commonly do, about five minutes before six. I then help Wm. in making the fire, after which I set the table for Prayers. I then call Mamma about quarter after six. We spell as we did before you went away. . . . I then go to school, where I hope I can say I study more than I did a little while ago. I am in another book called Virgil, and our class are even with another which came to the Latin School one year before us. After attending this school I go to Mr. Webb's private school, where I write and cipher. I go to this place at eleven and stay till one o'clock. After this, when I come home, I eat my dinner, and at two o'clock I resume my studies at the Latin School, where I do the same except in studying grammar. After I come home I do mamma her little errands if she has any; then I bring in my wood to supply the breakfast room. I then have some time to play and eat my supper. After that we say our hymns or chapters, and then take our turns in reading Rollin, as we did before you went. We retire to bed at different times. I go at a little after eight, and retire to my private devotions, and then close my eyes in sleep, and there ends the toil of the day."

Evidently, this was a simple, practical, God-fearing family, not without a tinge of Puritan austerity.

Emerson's mother seems to have been a serene, kindly spirit, undemonstrative, but with a depth of real feeling flashing out at times in marked relief to her usual tranquillity. On one occasion, as he relates, when he and his brother William had wandered off upon a holiday, and spent the day from home, they were surprised, on their return, at her exclaiming: "My sons, I have been in an agony for you!" "I went to bed," he says, "in bliss at the interest she showed." The means of the family were extremely narrow, and indeed it was chiefly through the assistance of kind friends that they were enabled to maintain themselves suitably, and afford to the sons a school and college education. It is stated that Ralph (as he was then called) and his brother Edward had but one great-coat between them, and were taunted in consequence by vulgar-minded school-fellows, who, with the amiability peculiar to the male animal of their time of life, delighted to inquire: "Whose turn is it to wear the coat to-day?"

In 1813 Emerson entered the Boston Latin School, where he was prepared for college. The head master was Mr. Benjamin Apthorp Gould, "an excellent master, who loved a good scholar, and waked his ambition." He was evidently not without patriotism, as Emerson records that, upon a rumored invasion of the British in 1814, Mr. Gould dismissed his pupils that they might assist in throwing up the

defences on Noddle's Island. The whole school went, but he confesses that he "cannot remember a stroke of work that I or my school-fellows accomplished." A school-mate—now Judge Loring of Washington—relates that Emerson was a good scholar, but not eminent; and that while he was liked by his fellows for his equable temper and fairness, his undemonstrativeness and distaste for athletic sports prevented him from being notably popular. He was known as an impressive declaimer, and particularly delighted in highly rhetorical passages. He once quoted for the delectation of a school-fellow a passage from one of Mr. N. L. Frothingham's sermons, representing man as "coming into the world girt in the poison robes of hereditary depravity, and with the curses of his Maker upon his head." It is scarce necessary to add that the Emerson of later days would hardly have approved of either the rhetoric or the sentiment of this sulphurous blast of Calvinism.

In 1817, having finished his course at the Latin School, he entered Harvard, and, upon Mr. Gould's recommendation, was appointed President's Freshman,—an office that entitled him to free lodging in the President's house,—and he afterwards obtained the position of waiter at commons, which relieved him of the cost of three-fourths of his board. He also received something from one of the scholarship funds.

During Emerson's stay at Harvard he began to manifest the strong individuality, the determination to follow his own bent in matters which lesser men are willing to leave to usage or authority, which distinguished him through life, and is the key-note to his philosophy. We are not surprised, then, to learn that he delighted in out-of-the-way books, especially poetry,—Ben. Jonson, Otway, Massinger, and even Byron and Moore, somewhat to the detriment of his knowledge of Locke, Paley, and Stewart, and decidedly so of the "impossible Analytical Geometry." In his own way, he was industrious, taking copious notes from his general reading, his note-books containing evidence of a wide acquaintance with history, poetry, memoirs, and the English reviews. With the more studious members of the class he was popular, and that he was not deficient in student-spirit, the following anecdote shows. In his sophomore year, owing to a hazing scrape, some of his classmates were expelled. The remaining members, Emerson with them, thereupon indignantly withdrew, and remained at home until they came to terms with the authorities.

He graduated in 1821, and became his brother William's assistant in a school for young ladies in Boston, remaining three years, two as assistant, and one, in the absence of his brother, as principal. I pass over the

interesting account of his school-keeping, his preparation for the ministry, and his enforced trip to the South, to his installment as pastor of the Second Church in Boston.

Upon the resignation of Mr. Ware in the spring of 1829, Emerson became sole incumbent. In September of the same year he married Miss Ellen Louisa Tucker, daughter of Beza Tucker, a merchant of Boston. At this time, when life should have worn its brightest aspect, when his own future and that of those nearest him was assured, he seems to have been troubled with some vague forecast of evil. A letter to Miss Mary Emerson, although it sums up with assumed cheerfulness the improved prospects of the family, is overclouded with a tinge of despondency foreign to his self-reliant nature. A careful analysis of his opinions, at this time, as shown through the medium of correspondence, and recorded conversations with intimate friends, leaves little doubt as to the cause of the tone of this letter. An appeal to that inward consciousness which was to him an unerring monitor in questions of duty, revealed to him, doubtfully at first, but more forcibly each time he faced his congregation, that his position was a false one. Out of regard to the prejudices of his hearers and the established usages of the church, he felt that he could not express his convictions with that freedom that was to him as the breath of life. He was not free to speak and act the truth. He had outgrown the error of man's age of faith that classes theology with the exact sciences. Forms and ceremonies, the symbolism of what Carlyle has quaintly termed the "religion of the rotatory calabash," were to him trivial, if not odious. With a unique contempt for the virtue of consistency, he desired to be free to contradict to-day what he had preached yesterday. Naturally, this did not suit the good people of the Second Church, and was rank heresy in the sight of his colleagues in the ministry. They were willing that he should tear away somewhat of the trimming added to the garment of Christian truth by Peter and Martin, but with the shoulder-knots and silver lace fancied by John he was not to interfere. His liberal views were made manifest in his sermons, which shocked the orthodox, although they charmed the younger and more advanced hearers. Indeed the earnest, unconventional tone of his discourse augmented his general popularity, and people from remote churches, —among them Margaret Fuller,—were drawn by him to "the unfashionable precincts of the 'Old North.'" The peculiar charm of Emerson's presence is thus described by Mr. Congdon: "One day there came into our pulpit the most gracious of mortals, with a face all benignity, who gave out the first

hymn and made the first prayer as an angel might have read and prayed." The congregational dissensions arising from his unorthodox views finally came to a crisis, and he resigned his office, ostensibly on account of a difference of opinion relating to the Communion Service, although the real cause lay far deeper. After much discussion, his resignation was accepted, although his salary was continued for a time.

I have dwelt somewhat at length upon this period of Emerson's life, as it seems to me to be his real point of departure from the career for which his early training and predilections had destined him. He continued to preach occasionally, however, not devoting himself wholly to the lyceum until some years afterwards.

One of the most interesting chapters in Mr. Cabot's book is that headed "Transcendentalism." He describes the origin of the term, as connected with a series of informal meetings of a number of Emerson's friends, among them Mr. Alcott, Margaret Fuller, James Freeman Clarke, and Thoreau; and a subsequent chapter analyzes Emerson's transcendentalism in a manner that divests one of the idea, which is too often entertained, that the views embodied in the term transcend common sense as well as common experience.

The somewhat unpleasant impression of Emerson conveyed by the portion of Mr. Whipple's essay relating to his capacity for business, is happily dispelled by this book. A perusal of the essay gives one the idea that, although theoretically a man of lofty ideals, bidding us "hitch our wagon to a star," Emerson was wont to descend from his lofty pedestal when fairly confronted with a question of dollars and cents, and transform himself into the typical Yankee, keen at a bargain and an admirable judge of investments. Mr. Cabot, on the contrary, assures us that, although careful in his expenditures, and having nothing of the philosopher's contempt for money, "he had no skill to earn it." The only matters of bargaining in which he showed any approach to shrewdness were those in connection with Carlyle's American booksellers. Lovers of Emerson will not be displeased to learn that "in bargaining for himself he was easily led to undervalue his own claims, and take an exaggerated view of those of the other party."

In his enthusiasm for reform he at one time thought of becoming a party to the Brook Farm community, and did introduce certain ideal methods into his own household, inviting the servants to the family table, and working manfully over the corn and potatoes in his garden. That his agricultural skill was limited is evident from his confession to Miss Fuller that "this day-labor of mine has hitherto a certain emblematic air, like the plough-



ing of the Emperor of China," and that "his son Waldo begs him not to hoe his leg." He took a rather conservative stand in the early anti-slavery agitation, but when a settlement of the question was seen to be inevitable, he nobly sustained his character as a reformer, and made ringing speeches against that blot upon our civilization. Emerson's career as a lecturer is dwelt upon at length, and the vicissitudes of travelling in those early days are graphically described.

Apart from its exceptional value as a means of estimating Emerson's private worth and his influence upon his contemporaries, the memoir is likely to owe its chief popularity to the gems of anecdote and characterization which sparkle throughout its pages. Emerson's tenderness and sympathy with children are often exemplified. One of his own children relates:

"He considered it our duty to look after all the strangers that came to the school; at his desire we had large tea-parties every year, to be sure to have all the out-of-town boys and girls come to the house. He used to ask me, when I told him of a new scholar, 'Did you speak to her?' 'No, I hadn't anything to say.' 'Speak, speak, if you haven't anything to say. Ask her, don't you admire my shoe-strings?'"

Of Carlyle he wrote:

"Carlyle and his wife live on beautiful terms. Nothing can be more engaging than their ways, and in her bookcase all his books are inscribed to her, as they came, from year to year, each with some significant lines."

"His sneers and scoffs are thrown in every direction. He breaks every sentence with a scoffing laugh,—'wind-bag,' 'monkey,' 'donkey,' 'bladder'; and, let him describe whom he will, it is always 'poor fellow.' I said: 'What a fine fellow are you to bespatter the whole world with this oil of vitriol!'"

Of Jeffrey he said:

"Jeffrey is always very talkative, very disputatious, very French; every sentence interlarded with French phrases; speaking a dialect of his own, neither English nor Scotch, marked with a certain petitesse, as one might say, and an affected elegance."

When Mr. Frenoh, the sculptor, was completing Emerson's bust, the latter plaintively observed, "The trouble is, the more it resembles me, the worse it looks."

In this delightful book, the reviewer, in regard to quotable matter, feels the embarrassment of riches, and is in no way likely to commit the sole fault charged to Mr. Cabot. Emerson's writings are not easily understood, and their influence has been largely indirect. It is not unusual to hear men of what is termed a "practical turn of mind" allude to him as a dreamy mystic who wrote a great deal of trash that he himself did not understand. The common refuge of ignorance is to ridicule that which it cannot comprehend.

Let us be guilty of no such absurdity with Emerson. In purity of life, and profundity of thought he immeasurably surpassed the majority of men. Carlyle—a man not given to rhapsodizing,—thus described the impression left upon him by this New England thinker, at the close of his first visit to their house:

"That man came to see me, I don't know what brought him, and we kept him one night, and then he left us. I saw him go up the hill; I didn't go with him to see him descend. I preferred to watch him mount and vanish like an angel."

EDWARD GILPIN JOHNSON.

#### A JUBILEE CHRONICLE.\*

A contemporary attempt to estimate the progress of a period must, in the nature of things, fail of success. Looking back upon an epoch from a distance, we recognize that a large part of its progress must be measured in its results for succeeding periods of time—as it has laid the foundation for after-builders, and furnished motive power for succeeding agencies. No man can take the measure of an age as it is closing; only the coming generations, which he can never know, may do this. The silent forces which pervade a period of a nation's history, yet come to the surface and to notice only in events far in the future, are the best portion of the chronicle which posterity alone can write. A history of Progress is handicapped by its very name. It is so far committed to an optimistic and partial view of the period under consideration. The space of years that divides the terminus *a quo* from that *ad quem* is in a fair way to become a gulf—social, intellectual, and moral—spanned only by the narrative of the writer. It is thus easy to pass from a worst possible world to a best possible one. Moreover, the historian is tempted, in dealing with his epoch, not merely to "be to its faults a little blind," but to ignore them altogether. Criticism is in danger of becoming panegyric, and the exclamation-mark replaces the interrogation-mark.

Still further: if this period in a nation's history has for its unifying element—in truth, for its *raison d'être* as a period—the public career of a popular sovereign, and that a woman, and its narration be written in an anniversary year amid the enthusiasm of jubilee celebrations and congratulations, then one will hardly look for calm judgments and fearless criticisms throughout its pages. So much the critic must concede from the ideal of a critical and permanent history to a jubilee chronicle

\*THE REIGN OF QUEEN VICTORIA. A Survey of Fifty Years of Progress. Edited by Thomas Humphrey Ward, M.A. In Two Volumes. London: Smith, Elder & Co. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.



of progress through a personal era. But having conceded so much, and because of the concession, with the thought thus vividly put before him of the purpose out of which such a history was born, and of the enthusiasm which must prompt its creation as a memorial, he may logically look to see that enthusiasm express itself in something more than an optimistic outlook. He will naturally look to see it clothe itself in a style penetrated by feeling, quickened by imagination, and made to glow with color. He will not be satisfied with an expression as cold and colorless, as devoid of imagination and of the ideal, as a Parliamentary Blue Book.

It must be confessed, then, that "The Reign of Queen Victoria," in spite of its valuable contents, is not a satisfactory book. It is edited by one of the most scholarly men in England; the larger portion of its chapters has been written by distinguished specialists; its facts have been gathered from sources of the highest authority. Yet, replete as is nearly every chapter with valuable and interesting information, and accurate as are most of its statements taken absolutely, the narrative as a whole is unfinished and misleading. The seamy side of life vanishes too completely as most of the writers near their concluding words, and those chapters which deal respectively with varied phases of English life need the unifying touch of a single hand which has felt the single pulse of the manifold England—industrial, political, religious, intellectual—beating through all its being. We feel the material world thrust too rudely upon us, and ask in vain where is the register of the spiritual forces of society, where is the voice of public opinion in moral and social questions during all these chronicled years? We feel, even while we read the chapter on "Religion and the Churches," that the Englishman as a social factor has disappeared under the accumulated tokens of his visible prosperity.

This criticism is not a sweeping one. It recognizes the individual merits of individual chapters. Mr. Matthew Arnold is too old a critic not to hold the mirror up to nature in his interesting account of the Schools; Mr. Fyffe writes on the Universities in a liberal and scholarly spirit, and with a discerning pen; Sir Henry Sumner Maine, in his account of India as well as in his forecast for her future, sustains his reputation as one of the profoundest and most philosophic minds of the age; Mr. Huxley would not be himself if, in his chapter on Science, which he writes in a most vivid and felicitous style, he were not continually critical as well as occasionally polemic; Sir Rowland Blennerhassett, although a landlord, suggests the true causes of Irish discontent. These are the best chapters in the

work. Mr. Arnold, while chronicling great progress in English schools, looks for reforms which are still much needed, and no man living is better qualified to speak on the theme. Mr. Fyffe puts the best spirit of Cambridge liberal progress into his sketch when he asks that every undergraduate of Oxford or Cambridge be required to pass the matriculation test of London University. Mr. Huxley tends to a scientific forecast for the future rather than to a mere chronicle for the past, and occasionally assumes in his readers too much ignorance of familiar principles of science. Yet his chapter is the most entertaining in the book, even although he falls into English so slovenly as this: "It must be admitted that the men of the Renaissance, though standing on the shoulders of the old philosophers, were a long time before they saw as much as their forerunners had done." The chapter on Ireland, although somewhat rose-colored in its views of Irish comfort to-day, is on the whole an intelligent and sympathetic presentation, by a landlord who would make the people the owners of the soil and substitute government in Ireland for a mere policing of the country.

Lord Justice Bowen traces, with a lawyer's insight, yet with an almost eager sympathy with reform, the removal of abuses in the administration of justice, and pays a just and authoritative tribute to the fidelity of Dickens's pictures of the circumlocution office in chancery. Mr. Mundella's chapter is a bald account of the grand work that Industrial Association has done and is doing to gain for the breadwinners a right to do more than merely exist: but the facts are eloquent in themselves. One realizes the solid basis on which the material prosperity of England rests, as he reads of her three great industries as they have grown to giant size—her cotton and iron manufactures and her shipping,—although the last is treated in scant space in the chapter on Locomotion. Strange to say, the great statistician Giffen is the most exultant of all the contributors, and revels in an appalling accumulation of figures in his chapter on the Growth and Distribution of Wealth. But the uninitiated know well that there is nothing more deceptive than figures, and even in this chapter the tacit argument that progress in population along with absolute accumulation of wealth means general progress is in close proximity to the suggestion that decline in population in Ireland is also a feature of progress. The procrustean process is a strenuous one, but is hardly to be viewed as a blessing even by perverters of the ideas of Malthus. The complacent view taken of the increase of numbers along the lines of skilled labor at the expense of the agricultural classes does not satisfy us so

long as the question will obtrude itself: Is the extreme division of labor on which this skill rests debasing the man while it perfects the machine, and robbing him of his industrial individuality and social independence? The possible effects of division, in dwarfing the man physically and mentally, degrading him morally and socially, and setting him in hostility to the classes of mastery, should have some discussion in a history of the age in which this division has so large a place. There is, however, profound wisdom in what Mr. Giffen says when, referring to the tremendous recent growth of the United States, industrially and commercially, he writes:

"It is said English commercial 'predominance' is threatened. But it may be pointed out that this is no real cloud. Predominance is not prosperity. The growth of a country like the United States, so full of wealth and resources of every kind, should in truth conduce to and not injure other countries. Why should it injure them? Its wealth makes it naturally a better customer than before; however Protectionist its leanings, it cannot sell abroad without buying."

Mr. Ward himself has written half a dozen chapters of the book. His introductory chapter is too brief. It should have dwelt on topics not elsewhere treated; it should have bound together more successfully the independent contributions of so many writers. His chapters which follow, on Legislation and Foreign Policy, are as colorless as they are accurate in the presentation of progress. One cannot avoid recalling the brilliant way in which Justin McCarthy has dealt with this whole reign of Victoria, and especially how well he has handled the legislation and the foreign policy of the period. Green and Bryce, Motley and Parkman, have shown, and Stephens is showing, that historical writing may combine criticism and imagination, accuracy of statement and brilliancy of presentation. Mr. Ward's survey of Art embodies a genuine appreciation of the ideal in English art as realized and fought for by the Pre-Raphaelites, and as true an understanding as that of Fergusson of what the true aim of modern Architecture should be; not reproductive and imitative, but freely creative. His panegyric, in the chapter on Locomotion and Transport, of that bewildering last product of the nineteenth century, Bradshaw's Railway Guide, dwelling upon its bulk admirably, makes one wish he could see a model American guide-book. While joining heartily with him in his view of the admirable system of crossings, approaches, and signals, which makes accidents so rare on English railways, an American can hardly endorse the statement that "the convenience of passengers has been consulted," as he reflects upon the lack of dining and other necessary conveniences, and wonders at the stupidity that refuses to

adopt the American baggage-checking system. Dr. Garnett's chapter on Literature is an exceedingly valuable criticism on England's Literature of the half-century, full of correct estimate and sympathetic appreciation. But it suffers by comparison in style with the fascinating pages of Stedman, and contains careless English unworthy of a critic of style. Still there is a perception of the underlying currents of thought of the epoch, and a suggestion of the trend of literature toward new channels which indicate a philosophic mind and a comprehensive vision. The estimates of Macaulay, Browning, Matthew Arnold, Tennyson, George Eliot, are especially noticeable. The importance attached to the "naturalization" of Emerson, Hawthorne, and Longfellow, in England, is as just as it is unusual. Two passages are worthy of especial note.

"The transition from the earlier to the later period of Queen Victoria's reign is accompanied by a modification of mental attitude and atmosphere. Tennyson is no longer the truest representative of the era, the spirit of which is more perfectly expressed by the most serious and purposeful of novelists, George Eliot. There is less faith, hope, and imagination; more earnestness, system, and science. This may be partly ascribed to the disappointment of over-sanguine expectations from political reforms, partly to the increasing perception of the magnitude of social evils, partly to the succession of calamities—the Crimean war and the Indian mutiny, the death of the Prince Consort, and the cotton dearth, which saddened while they exalted the spirit of the nation—but chiefly to the growing preponderance of the scientific view of life."

"Nor must the naturalization of American literature be left unnoticed. This will probably be one day regarded as the most important of all incidents in English literary history, taking its destinies out of the hands of domestic cliques and coteries, and indefinitely expanding both the area of its influence and the agencies by which it is to be moulded for the future."

One chapter alone in these volumes does not share in the prevailing optimism, but might have been the product of a mind chronically asking, "Is life worth living?" Sir William R. Anson writes on Constitutional Development in a melancholy strain. If some of the admirable reserve which led Mr. Huxley and Dr. Carter—remembering that "comparisons are odious"—to avoid the mention of names in their articles, had been maintained by Sir William, his chapter would have appeared less of a philippic and more of a plea for the independent voter. The writer's distrust of democracy has made him vitiate a fairly successful presentation of the rights of men as against parties, by a personal attack upon Mr. Gladstone as the leader and minister of an ochlocracy. For it is a pity that one who sees so clearly the threatening dangers of the subordination of patriotism to partisanship, and of the degradation of party

before "the machine," should be carried away from a scientific statement of fact and enunciation of principles by personal feeling. After this personal outburst, one is not surprised to hear the writer say of the Queen that "the powers given to her by the constitution have never been used to gratify a personal feeling." Curiously enough, the one power that remains to an English sovereign to-day, under the customary constitution—that of exercising some choice when a minister hands in his resignation—was exercised by Queen Victoria so recently as 1886, to express her well-known dislike for Mr. Gladstone. All will remember how promptly the resignation was accepted, thus cutting off all opportunity for reconsideration at a time when the reluctance of the other party to take office rendered a speedy reconsideration almost an absolute certainty. How the refusal of a sovereign to accept a hasty resignation has retained ministers in office, the reign of the present Queen and even Sir William's chapter may testify. The usual inability of English writers to understand the flexibility of our written constitution is again illustrated in the opening pages of the chapter. The distinguished writer might read to advantage Prof. Woodrow Wilson's admirable treatise on Congressional Government. In the face of the writer's apparent contention, that the expectation that George IV. would veto the Catholic Relief Bill indicates a survival to our own day of the crown's veto power, constitutional lawyers so eminent as Taswell-Langmead teach us that the king's refusal to do so was the one positive step needed to complete the progress of more than a century toward the complete and irrecoverable abandonment of that privilege. At pages 132-33 is one of the clearest and simplest statements of the facts in the controversy between Mr. Gladstone and the House of Lords over the Franchise Bill in 1884. The writer brings out clearly, what so few seem to comprehend, that the result was a triumph for the House of Lords, and not a compromise. How that result may affect the future of the Lords is a distinct matter.

The four comparative maps are suggestive and valuable auxiliaries. But the book should have a chapter as well as a map on London, a chapter on Charities in relation to Crime and to Well-Being, one on Public Opinion, and one on Ideas versus Philistinism. The fact that the book is the work of many hands is no excuse for its lack of discussion of important topics, for its lack of a true perspective in the view total. An editor in such a case exists not merely to assign and combine, but to direct, to coördinate, to blend, to put the dry bones together, and breathe through them a single soul. This work is a cyclopædia, largely by optimists; a blue-book compilation;

and as such it is invaluable, with its treasures of facts and figures,—but it does not write the history of Queen Victoria's reign. That has been better done by others. It will be best done by our grandchildren.

J. J. HALSEY.

#### PATRICK HENRY.\*

Nothing is more delightful than "harking back" a hundred years. Let us link arms with Professor Tyler and leave the present with its roar and railroads, to dwell in the past with its quiet equestrianism, piety, and patriotism.

Our author starts with a charming scene drawn from an old manuscript in the possession of the Byrds of Westover (Harrison's Landing, where our army encamped in 1862 after the "seven-days' fight.")

"On the evening of October 7, 1732, that merry Old Virginian, Colonel William Byrd, of Westover, having just finished a journey through King William County for the inspection of his estates, was conducted, for his night's lodging, to the house of a blooming widow, Mistress Sarah Syme, in the County of Hanover. This lady, at first supposing her guest to be some new suitor for her lately disengaged affections, 'put on a gravity that becomes a Weed;' but so soon as she learned her mistake and the name of her distinguished visitor, she 'brighten'd up with an unusual cheerfulness and Serenity. She was a portly, handsome Dame, of the Family of Esau, and seem'd not to pine too much for the Death of her Husband who was of the Family of the Saracens. . . . This widow is a person of a lively and cheerful Conversation, with much less Reserve than most of her Countrywomen. It becomes her very well, and sets off her other agreeable Qualities to Advantage. We tost off a Bottle of honest Port which we relish't with a broil'd chicken. At Nine I retir'd to my Devotions, And then slept so Sound that Fancy itself was Stupify'd, else I should have dreamt of my most obliging Landlady.' The next day being Sunday, 'the courteous Widow invited me to rest myself there that good day and go to Church with Her, but I excus'd myself by telling her she wou'd certainly spoil my Devotion. Then she civilly entreated me to make her House my Home whenever I visited my Plantations, which made me bow low and thank her very kindly.'

"Not very long after that notable visit, the sprightly widow gave her hand in marriage to a young Scotchman of good family, John Henry of Aberdeen, . . . and, continuing to reside on her estate of Studley, in the county of Hanover, she became, on May 29, 1736, the mother of Patrick Henry."

The youth hated books and industry, and loved shooting and fishing and a poor farmer's daughter named Sarah Shelton whom he married when he was eighteen. Together they proceeded, with a few acres and fewer slaves, to produce a family and support it; succeed-

\*PATRICK HENRY. By Moses Coit Tyler. (American Statesmen Series.) Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.



ing admirably in the former task but not at all in the latter. Before he was twenty-three he had been thrice a bankrupt,—once as a planter and twice as a merchant. Then, in his own shiftless way he became a lawyer, getting his certificate rather by the favor of his examiners than his success in passing his examination. Previous accounts are conflicting as to his early success at the bar; but Professor Tyler tries to set them all at rest by an amazing reference to a fee-book which has been placed in his hands by some of his hero's descendants; from which he learns that within his first three-and-a-quarter years' practice at the little tribunal of his county he had taken fees in 1185 cases.

The nineteenth century practitioner, on reading this, is divided in sentiment between a wish that, since he has "harked back" to the eighteenth century, he could stay there; and a suspicion that there must be some mistake. Most lawyers go through a whole professional career without being individually retained in 1185 cases. If there be a mistake it is probably of this kind. In the old practice, a certain small fee was prescribed for each act done by an attorney—filing a *præcipe*, 6d.; notice of motion, 6d.; taking out a subpoena, 4d.; serving it, 12d.; and so on for declaration, plea, demurrer, or what not—the whole to be taxed as costs of suit and to be finally chargeable to the losing party. It is possible, though scarcely probable, that the young stumbler along the rugged path of practice may have entered up 1185 such items during the first three or four years of his progress.

However this may be, it was in his fourth year at the bar that Patrick Henry, by the help of a packed jury, succeeded in perpetrating a gross wrong against the poor parish ministers of his county suing for their rights; and so stepped at once into a large practice in such cases. His biographer apologizes for this as well as he can.

The next landmark in Henry's progress was of a more creditable nature: an act which strikes the key note of his subsequent greatness. Elected to the Virginia House of Burgesses in 1765, he promptly took the lead in opposition to the "Stamp Act"—took it away from the stout old leaders in that house, and carried it on with a vigor that stunned them all. Then it was he made his famous speech closing: "Caesar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third" ["Treason! Treason!"] "George the Third may profit by their example! If this be treason, make the most of it."

"On the afternoon of that day, Patrick Henry, knowing that the session was practically ended, and that his own work in it was done, started for his home. He was seen passing along Duke of

Gloucester street, [Williamsburg] wearing buckskin breeches, his saddlebags on his arm, leading a lean horse, and chatting with Paul Carrington, who walked by his side."

Another pleasant bit of 18th century color is the account of his journey to the first Continental Congress.

"Patrick Henry arrived on horseback at Mount Vernon . . . and having remained there that day and night he set out for Philadelphia on the following morning in the company of Washington and of Edmund Pendleton. From the jottings in Washington's diary, we can so far trace the progress of this trio of illustrious horsemen as to ascertain that on Sunday the 4th of September they breakfasted at Christiana Ferry, dined at Chester, and reached Philadelphia for supper—thus arriving in town barely in time to be present at the first meeting of the Congress on the morning of the 5th."

This seems a little like another world, or another age; and yet it is not so far away. We have all seen men who were alive then—some of us thousands of them. The Revolutionary pension lists are not closed even now, though the last of the actual fighters has departed.

It was in March, 1775, that Henry made his famous speech in favor of war with England—the speech at which so many schoolboys have spouted since. Our author gives some new descriptions of the scene and the orator's manner; but they weaken rather than strengthen the ideal: for instance where they describe the hands raised in air at "give me liberty"—a pause—"or give me death!" the hands lowered and the right brought down and striking the heart as if holding a dagger.

We need not follow the subject through all Henry's public career. Wirt's life of Henry gives one view of it—that inspired by Jefferson; Professor Tyler takes a more flattering view, supported by later and fuller testimony, and combats the old strictures with an appearance of much personal bias against Jefferson, who seems to be disfavored by him as an authority, as a statesman, and as a man.

Henry was made Commander-in-chief of the Virginia forces in 1775, and, like many other civilians, looked at a military career as his appropriate sphere of action in the coming contest. He really seems to have done some good military service with his troops, connected with the seizure of some powder by the British, which he compelled the Royal Governor to ransom with £320 sterling. But he soon found that his subordinate in command was given all the real fighting to do, so he resigned, in some dudgeon.

"None doubted his courage or his alacrity to hasten to the field; but it was plain that he did not seem to be conscious of the importance of strict discipline in the army, but regarded his soldiers as so many gentlemen who had met to defend their country, and exacted from them little more than the courtesy that was proper among equals. To



have marched to the seaboard at that time with a regiment of such men would have been to insure their destruction."

History repeats itself. We have met some "political generals" in our own day and generation.

Patrick Henry was the first Governor of the State of Virginia, being elected in 1776 and serving till 1779. During this time (in the summer of 1778) he sent out the expedition under Col. Clark which took Fort Chartres "in the Illinois country" (then part of Virginia), and overawed the Indians so that the western frontier settlements were safe thenceforth. Henry seems to have made a very good war governor, though at times a very discouraged one. An amusing story of the precipitate flight of the legislature at the approach of Tarleton and his men does not probably indicate anything really discreditable. A legislature can not fight a battalion of horse.

But, as our author remarks, it was evident that a vast majority of the people were quite willing to have somebody else do their fighting for them. It was utterly impossible to fill the state's quota under the calls of Congress; and we are again and again surprised, first at the rareness of patriotism and the prevalence of its opposite in those times which we look upon as so heroic and glorious; and second, that any victory at all was ever won. Poor Henry says: "But tell me, do you remember any instance where tyranny was destroyed and freedom established on its ruins among a people possessing so small a share of virtue and public spirit?"

Washington, our French allies, and the divisions in the councils of England,—these are the only keys to account for the success of the seeming vanquished and the failure of the seeming victors.

Patrick Henry opposed the Constitution as originally framed (1788); but after the adoption (1791) of the ten amendments which were promised to satisfy him and other State-rights men, he became its firm supporter; going so far as to say that a State had no more right to question the validity of a Federal law than a County had to attack a State law. He was an ardent free-trader. Said he:

"Fetter not commerce. Let her be as free as air: she will range the whole creation and return on the wings of the four winds of heaven to bless the land with plenty."

As a means of civilizing the Indians, he proposed money bounties to encourage their inter-marriage with the whites!

"He thought the introduction of a harmless beverage as a substitute for distilled spirits, would be beneficial. . . . To render the beverage (small beer) fashionable and popular, he always had it on his table while he was governor during his last term of office; and he continued its use, but drank nothing stronger, while he lived."

" 'Slavery is detested: we feel its fatal effects—we deplore it with all the pity of humanity. . . . As we ought with gratitude to admire that decree of Heaven which has numbered us among the free, we ought to lament and deplore the necessity of holding our fellow-men in bondage.' "

Washington, who had been somewhat estranged by Henry's opposition to the Constitution, resumed his friendship; and in 1795 offered him a place in his cabinet, as Secretary of State, and later the office of Chief Justice; but age and failing health compelled him to decline both. Professor Tyler says that in 1796 the Federal leaders were strongly inclined "to nominate Patrick Henry for the Vice-Presidency" for the term succeeding that of Washington and Adams, but thought he would not accept. (Were nominations made for the *vice-presidency* at that election?) Concerning this, Jefferson said: "Most assiduous court is paid [by the Federalists] to Patrick Henry. He has been offered everything which they knew he would not accept." Party bitterness already!

Professor Tyler's style is full of vivacity. Good-natured belligerency might be given as its distinguishing characteristic. One can hardly say that he naught extenuates, but he certainly does not set down aught in malice. He is sure his hero was a great statesman, and tries to think he was only prevented by injustice from being a great soldier; all to combat the idea that he was nothing but an orator. Yet he need not have done so, for those were the days when oratory was still a power, and men were moved by it to memorable deeds.

JOSEPH KIRKLAND.

#### THE SCIENCE OF THOUGHT.\*

A book by Max Müller, whatever else it may be, is always readable and suggestive. This praise can hardly be denied to his latest work, "The Science of Thought," even by those specialists who regret his neglect of the austere duty of editing Sanscrit texts, and who hold, to parody Plato's stern verdict on Socrates, that Müller is corrupting philosophy and philology, two things each good in itself, by attempting an impossible fusion between them. And those who believe that the combined lights of linguistic and philosophic research are needed to illumine the mysterious relations of language and thought, need make no reservations in the favor of which they welcome this attempt of the veteran philologist to coördinate with the fund of special knowledge acquired in his studious youth the philosophic ideas he has been gathering in the discursive readings of his riper age. The

\* THE SCIENCE OF THOUGHT. By F. Max Müller. In two volumes. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

attempt is on the whole successful. "The Science of Thought" is perhaps the most important contribution to English philosophic literature since Mill's examination of the philosophy of Sir William Hamilton.

The serious effort of thought running through the book, however, is obscured by a defective method, by an almost total lack of unity, and, in some measure, by the very qualities that make the work so readable: the discursive, gossipy, anecdotal style, the wealth of well-chosen illustrations, the ever fresh and somewhat youthful enthusiasm for the science of Language as the key to all knowledge, and the constant implication of this sound doctrine with much piquant but not always well considered criticism of great thinkers too hastily studied. These qualities and defects are sufficiently explained and justified by the author's statement that the book is largely a working over of materials from recent periodical publications, and has been written for himself "and for a few friends with whom he has been travelling for many years on the same road." Superficially regarded, the two volumes before us form a long *causerie* on Professor Max Müller, his achievements, and his honorable position in England and in the scientific world as the mediator between the English and German mind; on the Vedas and the Kantian Philosophy; on Mill's Logic, Darwinism, and Schopenhauer; on Panini's grammar and the garden of Sanscrit roots; on the old thesis, once so hotly debated with Professor Whitney, that language and thought are inseparable; in short, *de omnibus rebus at quibusdam aliis*. But the want of a definitely constructed framework, as Bacon was careful to point out when he chose to throw his own thoughts into the form of aphorisms, is not always prejudicial to the expression of the results of philosophic analysis. Every system of philosophy, whatever its pretensions to objective adequacy, is after all only the reflection of the universe in a single consciousness,—it is the man coördinating and exalting the ideas and impressions won from his pursuits, his feelings, his experiences, his studies, his knowledge. The framework of an artistic system may serve to disguise the gaps left by the undue prominence the thinker must assign to those aspects of the universe that have preoccupied his attention; but, to mix the metaphor, as surely as the nature of man is finite, so surely is there a rift in every philosophic lute that attempts to catch and render the music of the spheres.

The *naïveté* with which this personal note is allowed to manifest itself in Max Müller's writing need not hinder our recognition of any valuable thought he emphasizes, while it does certainly add to our amusement as we read. We are pleased to learn the ideas suggested by a juxtaposition of the Vedas and

the Kantian philosophy in Müller's consciousness, even though we see no other ground of connection between those widely-severed products of Aryan thought. Darwinians may or may not be impressed by the announcement that language is a "fortress untaken and unshaken," "which is not to be frightened into submission by a few random shots;" but they will all be interested in reading how Darwin himself once pleasantly remarked to the author that he was "a dangerous man." Any chill skepticism we may feel as to Müller's competency to discuss special problems of instinct and heredity is dissolved in our delight at learning that "Waldmann," the father of Matthew Arnold's "Geist," still flourishes in a green old age. And Müller's clear vivacious accounts of the Kantian philosophy and of much recent progress in German philology are none the less useful that his didactic style still, in 1887, reveals traces of the assumption, perhaps pardonable in 1861, that he is the sole or chief interpreter between the German and English mind.

It is the more necessary to dwell on the serious thought disguised in this frivolous envelope, because of certain features in the book that will repel the very readers whom it would be most likely to benefit. The polemic against exaggerated Darwinianism, the setting up of language as an absolute barrier, the unqualified acceptance of the Kantian Categories and the criticism of Mill's Logic, will lead many scientific men to regard the book as the production of a reactionary thinker still in the "metaphysical stage" and vainly endeavoring to stem the tide of positive scientific progress. Taking the book as a whole, there could be no greater mistake. On certain problems of origin Müller refuses to dogmatize, but all definite scientific problems discussed by him are treated in the positive scientific spirit. The ambiguities that clouded some of his early utterances have largely disappeared. Whether this is due to the fact that expression is freer in the Oxford of 1887 for the man whose position is won, than it was to the beginner of 1861, or to the influence of Professor Noiré and to Müller's recent philosophical studies, it would be indiscreet to inquire. Certain it is that he has been reading some very good books—books that always bring good fortune to the careful student,—Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Mill, and Schopenhauer, whom he has discussed with Professor Noiré, one of the ablest of recent Schopenhauerians; and in attempting to reconcile or correct the various opinions of these authors with the aid of the conclusions he has reached by his lifelong study of language, he has brought into prominence some truths inadequately recognized by psychologists wanting in linguistic training, and has made perhaps the only

useful criticism of the generally accepted classifications of Mill's Logic.

It is, of course, impossible to do justice in a hasty notice to either the philosophic or the philological side of so extensive a work; but it may not be altogether unprofitable to endeavor to set forth the leading thought of the book in barest outline. That thought may, for our purposes, be conveniently resumed in three propositions: 1. Language and thought are identical and inseparable. 2. The history of the human mind is, therefore, to be sought in the record of language, more completely continuous and incomparably older than any written historic record. 3. A complete history of all the words we use would solve all problems of philosophy, or rather analyze them out of existence, leaving no place for philosophy, as may be shown by the successful solution by this method of certain typical metaphysical puzzles. The ambiguities and exaggerations naturally attaching to the vivacious enunciation of propositions like these are gradually cleared away as the argument proceeds; and in the end, under the guidance of Professor Noiré, Müller arrived in logic at a clear-cut nominalism, which in some respects constitutes an advance even upon Mill, and in metaphysics at a form of monism, with the Unknowable for a background, not essentially different from that philosophy of which Schopenhauer has stated the inner, Herbert Spencer the outer aspect. Let us follow him part way on this path.

His discussion of the thesis of the identity of thought and language sets forth certain essential truths with a large admixture of polemic. The truths are that our mental furniture consists solely of images and symbols in various associations; that all thought is either the direct or symbolic association and disassociation of images; that the distinctive thought of man is of necessity mainly symbolic; that while other signs may serve (and, notably, a fact ignored by Müller, images themselves may be used as pure algebraic symbols in processes of thought), the signs of language are practically the only symbols much employed; and language has therefore become indissolubly associated with the complex groupings of images that mainly distinguish the human from the brute mind. But in Müller's first two chapters on the "Constituent Elements of Thought" and on "Thought and Language," these ideas are worked out with an irrelevant exuberance of polemic directed against all thinkers, past or present, who deny this principle, fail to give it adequate recognition, or do not perceive its immense significance for the problems of philosophy. Much of this polemic is purely verbal. Mill is accused of paltering with the great truth, because, following Plato's "Cratylus," he says that names

cannot teach us the truth of things, but only the opinions of those who imposed the names and who must have got their knowledge without names. But in another place, Mill is cited as declaring that "to say that we think by means of concepts is only a circuitous and obscure way of saying that we think by means of general and class names." On the other hand, Müller himself was once accused by Whitney, in a now forgotten controversy, of the opposite exaggeration of declaring that language is the only possible symbol by which thought can be carried on. Against this misconception he now explicitly protests, and admits that any sign may serve as a centre for the cluster of associations that form the concept. Such misunderstandings, where the debaters are really at one, are very unprofitable. The fact is that the close inter-relations of language and thought, and the significance of language as the chief factor in human evolution, have a stronger hold on Müller's imagination than on the minds of the thinkers whom he criticises, and much of his criticism is an eloquent expostulation intended to stimulate them to the proper appreciation of so important a matter.

Two interesting chapters on "The Philosophy of Kant" and on "Language, the Barrier between Man and Beast," discuss the bearings of the principle of the identity of language and thought on some of the burning philosophic questions of the day. There is no space to follow Müller in his analysis of Kant. The essential characteristic of the Kantian way of thinking is to treat as implicitly contained in sensuous perceptions those explicit categories of thought which we cannot now escape in any utterances we may make about them. This way of thinking necessarily comes in conflict with the extreme association psychology, which undertakes to build up all categories by the mere association of primitive sensations. Superficial thinkers, light-armed dialecticians hovering on the outskirts of the two contending armies, will continue to shower the argumentative darts of an idle controversy. Thinkers of weightier metal will perhaps perceive that we have here one of those typical puzzles of an infinite series to which no satisfactory answer can be given. Which is first, the hen or the egg? Or, to take the problem much debated by contemporary biologists, shall we say with Lucretius that use and function create and precede the organ, or with Plato, that the organ created in view of the use precedes and creates the use? In an infinite series of two alternating members, it is really a matter of feeling to which member we assign priority. But the feeling is one that has divided the world of thinkers into two classes. Max Müller belongs to the class of Kantians who assign priority to the hen.



But he concedes all that intelligent opponents would demand, when he says that even on the evolution hypothesis we may remain Kantians, "as it would be even then the category of causality that works in the mollusk and makes it extend its tendrils toward the crumb of bread which has touched it and has evoked in it a reflex action, a grasping after its prey." No intelligent evolutionist, on the other hand, would refuse to admit that it is impossible for the association psychology to construct space, time, and causality, without the at least verbal contradiction of assuming the result at every step of the process. The difference, then, is mainly one of expression and feeling.

Much the same may be said of Müller's attitude toward the doctrine more particularly associated with the name of Darwin. Ruskin says that it may be true that it requires the same amount of heat to make a kettle boil as to lift an eagle to his eyrie, but that the fact of this underlying identity will always remain less interesting to the artist than the undeniable difference that the eagle has a beak and the kettle a spout. On this question, also, thinkers are divided into two families, and Müller feels with those who think as artists. He belongs to the minds that find more satisfaction in the contemplation of form, order, measure, and definite type, than in that of change, transition, and imperceptible development. His feelings lead him to protest in the name of ordered and classified knowledge against the hasty and facile methods of enthusiastic evolutionists, who, having established the fundamental principle that nothing in this world is single, but that all things, by a law anything but divine, in one another's being mingle, proceed to abolish all the convenient lines of demarcation within which the actual work of science has mainly to be accomplished. Where Plato saw "ideas" and Schopenhauer fixed stages of the manifestation of the Eternal Will, Müller sees in Nature certain (capitalized) Broad Lines, whose relations he does not like to have confused. He does not deny that these Broad Lines may have been developed. But all heterogeneity must have been implicit in the homogeneity from which it has been evolved. The possession of language-thought, the *logos* of the Greeks, the power of originating *notio* and *nomen* in one, is such a Broad Line, marking off man from the animals. It is true, language is a growth. Man has become "speakable of mute," as is proved by the discovery of cave-dwellers who lacked the mental or genial muscle that moves the tongue. But the germ of this development must have always distinguished the animal that was to become man from animals that did not possess this power and potency. The "*homo alalos*" must have been potentially, though not actually, capa-

ble of discourse of reason,—must have been *rationalis* if not *rationalis*. He cannot, therefore, have been developed from the monkey or from any other specific animal type which subsequent development has shown to be not even potentially *rationalis et orationis*, but must have been developed from an independent stock, potentially endowed with the distinctively human faculty. And Müller argues that this doctrine is not really inconsistent with Darwinianism, since Darwin himself held that biological evolution started from many centres rather than from one, and many able Darwinians still believe in polygony rather than in monogony.

There remains but scant space for Müller's account of the history of the human mind as revealed in language. An analysis of the constituent elements of language brings him to the proposition he has so often enunciated: Language consists of a certain number of conceptual and demonstrative roots, which resist further analysis. The two hundred and fifty thousand words of the English dictionary can be reduced to a few hundred roots, for the most part expressive of the ideas of the simple acts of a primitive society. What is the origin of these roots? And since language and conceptual thought are identical, what is the origin of abstraction and conceptual thought?

Following Professor Noiré, Müller offers us an exceedingly ingenious and suggestive explanation of the origin of language, a theory which the wits of England, mindful of the fortune of the nicknames "bow-wow" and "pooh-pooh," have saluted with the title of the "yo-heave-ho" theory. It is briefly this: It is a physiological fact that physical labor is often accompanied by the instinctive emission of more or less articulate grunts and sounds, which relieve the tension of the nerves or lend an enlivening rhythm to motion. These sounds may even be supposed to have some faint analogies with the character of the labor they accompany, though this is perhaps fanciful. Suppose a group of primitive men engaged in digging, for example. Among the sounds they utter some one may gradually come to predominate, either the sound emitted by the leader or some compromise sound, uniting in a single phonetic type the cries of the majority. In hundreds of cases this sound would be forgotten and come to naught. In the thousandth case it might take definite form and become distinctly associated in the minds of the group with the remembrance and consciousness of the accompanying act. Suppose in a given instance the sound to be *Khan*, the Sanscrit root "to dig." Suppose the sound to survive, to become definitely associated with digging in the minds of the tribe, and to be used by the leaders as an imperative summons



to digging. We have at once the origin of the widely ramified root *Khan* and of the concept "digging." I have put the theory thus baldly at once, in spite of the readiness with which all such hypotheses can be ridiculed, because this statement helps us over what has always been a stumbling block to clear thinkers in Müller's utterances about language, namely, the insistence that language began in roots expressive of wide general concepts. Scientific psychology, on the other hand, asserts the priority of the concrete and individual. But we have obviously to deal with another of those two-faced questions relating to an infinite series or to an endless chain. The first stage in the creation of the root *Khan* and concept "dig" is merely the physical act of digging and the *clamor concomitans*. But as soon as the sound has settled into a definite phonetic type and the association has become permanent, we have, in truth, a new creation of a root and concept. For the sound *Khan*, then, is not a name deliberately devised and imposed upon the definite image of a single concrete material object; it is a naturally developed symbol of a generalized human act. And that act is, even by primitive man, conceived rather in the form of a general appeal to certain activities in himself and of their effects on the outer world, than in the form of a sensuous image of one particular scene of digging. Thus it is quite possible for scientific psychology to accept in a sense the doctrine to which the analysis of language leads us,—that the prime elements of thought and language are, speaking generally, roots associated with generalized concepts of human activities.

The chapter in which these results are worked out is very rich. Müller discusses the antecedents of Noiré's philosophy in Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Schopenhauer, and with his usual wealth of apt illustration he makes all needful concessions as to the part possibly played by onomatopœia and mere animal emotional interjections in the origin of a limited class of roots. Without these qualifications, and without his elaborate illustration of the way in which, from the few given elements, the entire structure of language can be built up, the theory naturally wears an air of arbitrariness that can easily be made to look ridiculous. Especially significant are his explanations of the derivation of special terms for color from roots signifying originally "to smear," "to cover," "be warm," "bright," "sharp," and the like.

The second volume opens with an elaborate chapter on Sanscrit roots which will be caviar to all but professed students of language. The upshot of it all is that after neglecting superfluous synonyms we can reduce the concepts embodied in primitive Sanscrit roots to some hundred-and-twenty-one ideas of actions,

movements, and conditions of early man, by the various combinations of which the entire fabric of subsequent thought has been constructed, as the living organism is built up from cells, or as the infinite variety of the material world is based on the properties of a few primitive elements.

The remainder of the second volume is devoted to the elucidation of this process and to the application of the results to certain problems of logical classification that have been forced upon Müller's attention by the study of Mill's *Logic*. It is impossible to do justice to these subjects here. I will only add that there could hardly be a more useful discipline for a young student than the study of these chapters in connection with the early chapters of Mill's *Logic*. The discussions on abstract, general, and concrete terms, on the proper use of the terms connote and denote, etc., if not always justifiable as criticisms of Mill, are always suggestive of reservations and qualifications required in the interpretation of the necessarily concise formulas of the *Logic*.

In thus summarizing the philosophic thought of this valuable work, I have been compelled to omit much that will constitute its chief interest in the eyes of those who are only languidly concerned in speculations on the origin of language and the relation of language and thought. Philological specialists will determine the value of Müller's criticisms and reservations with regard to recent tendencies in Germany. But the general reader may be reminded that the hand that wrote the "Lectures on the Science of Language" has lost none of its cunning. In the volumes before us the discussions on onomatopœia, on the ramification of meaning from simple root concepts, and on the classification of metaphors conscious and unconscious, are marked by all the old felicity of statement and exuberance of aptest illustration. There is, perhaps, a severe dignity in the austere labor of creative scholarship; but the production of volumes like these is, to borrow a phrase from Plato, no unworthy pastime for the old age of a philosopher—or of a philologist.

PAUL SHOREY.

#### THE CONFESSION OF COUNT TOLSTOI.\*

The inner history of any strong personal experience is instructive; more deeply so when it is that of a man of ardent feeling, of earnest aspiration, and fine intellect. The life of Count Tolstoi, as it has been revealed in his writings, has excited universal interest. His

\* MY CONFESSION, and THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST'S TEACHING. By Count Lyof N. Tolstoi. Translated from the Russian. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co.

genius was first made known through his earlier works of fiction; and immediately upon the enthusiasm which this created there came intimations of curiously eccentric conduct induced largely by intense and peculiar religious convictions. The novelist's own account of the singular tenets which have become the rule of his life, cutting short, as it is judged, a brilliant literary career, is given in the volume entitled "My Religion." A supplement to this work—or, more properly speaking, the prelude to it—now appears under the title of "My Confession." It was written in 1879, and in the right order of sequence should precede the book which it follows as an appendix. It is the simple avowal of a heart utterly intent on the service of truth and unmindful of the praise or censure of men.

Count Tolstoi was christened and educated, like the mass of the Russian nation, in the Orthodox Greek Church. Nothing disturbed the passive character of his faith until his twelfth year (in 1838), when a boyish comrade brought him word of the discovery, rife among the pupils of a gymnasium, that there was no God, and all that had been taught concerning him was merely the product of human invention. The young Lyof was captured by the novel idea, and thereupon began reading Voltaire. In his precocious wisdom he perceived the necessity of learning the catechism and continuing attendance at church; but his faith in the creed of his fathers gradually died out, until, at the age of sixteen, he ceased to pray or pay heed to any of the observances it prescribed. Nevertheless the instincts of a religious nature were not to be suppressed; and to satisfy these he strove after perfection in mental and bodily attainments, pushing his studies in every direction and inuring himself to severe physical exercises and the endurance of voluntary trials and privations.

The pathetic tenor of this period in the history of the motherless boy is little more than hinted at in the narrative, but between lines like the following its entire significance may easily be read:

"I honestly desired to make myself a good and virtuous man; but I was young, I had passions, and I stood alone, altogether alone, in my search after virtue. Every time I tried to express the longings of my heart for a truly virtuous life, I was met with contempt and derisive laughter; but directly I gave way to the lowest of my passions, I was praised and encouraged. . . . I gave way to these passions, and becoming like unto my elders, I felt that the place which I filled in the world satisfied those around me. My kind-hearted aunt, a really good woman, used to say to me, that there was one thing above all others which she wished for me—an intrigue with a married woman: 'Rien ne forme un jeune homme, comme une liaison avec une femme comme il faut.' Another of her wishes for my hap-

piness was that I should become an adjutant, and if possible, to the Emperor; the greatest happiness of all for me, she thought, would be that I should find a wealthy bride who would bring me as her dowry an enormous number of slaves."

The Count arraigns the sins of his youth in unsparing terms.

"I put men to death in war, I fought duels to slay others, I lost at cards, wasted my substance wrung from the sweat of peasants, punished the latter cruelly, rioted with loose women, and deceived men. Lying, robbery, adultery of all kinds, drunkenness, violence, murder, all committed by me, not one crime omitted, and yet I was not the less considered by my equals a comparatively moral man. Such was my life during ten years. During that time I began to write, out of vanity, love of gain, and pride. I followed as a writer the same path which I had chosen as a man."

Notwithstanding the career of dissipation thus unreservedly avowed, the better self dominated at intervals, for it was while he was in the army that Tolstoi laid the firm foundation of his literary career. At twenty-six, when the war closed and he repaired to St. Petersburg, he was welcomed by the guild of authors there as one of the most gifted and promising of their fraternity. It was the conviction of this circle of thinkers and poets that they were ordained by the endowment of genius to be the instructors of mankind; and, without any definite preparation or purpose, they spoke and wrote and printed unceasingly. Count Lyof adopted the flattering theory with eagerness, and wrote and taught he "knew not what," with similar impetuosity.

"For doing this," he says, "I received large sums of money; I kept a splendid table, had an excellent lodging, associated with loose women, and received my friends handsomely; moreover, I had fame."

The natural integrity of the man again prevailed, however, and he sickened of the false pretenses of men whose immoralities even exceeded those to which he had been accustomed in his military career. He travelled abroad, everywhere mingling with eminent foreigners and searching among them for higher motives to sanctify the aims of life. He returned unsatisfied; and, turning his back upon the excitements and pursuits of the city and of a literary teacher, he settled in the country and busied himself with the organization of schools for the peasantry. A year was spent in this employment, and again he went abroad, looking for more light on the great social problems he was struggling to work out. His return this time was coincident with the emancipation of the serfs; and, accepting the office of a country magistrate, he resumed the work of education, teaching simultaneously in the schools and in the columns of a newspaper which he published. At the end of a twelvemonth his

health gave way and he was forced to seek restoration in new scenes and occupations. He was soon after married, and for a term of fifteen years was happily absorbed in the interests of his family and estate. Then arose anew in his mind the restless inquiry into the true meaning of life; and, tormented by the baffling query, he was brought to the verge of suicide. He was obliged to hide a cord to avoid hanging himself by it, and to cease carrying a gun because it offered too easy a way of getting rid of the misery of existence.

"Such was the condition I had come to," he says, "at a time when all the circumstances of my life were preëminently happy ones, and when I had not reached my fiftieth year. I had a good, a loving, and a well-beloved wife, good children, a fine estate, which, without much trouble on my part, continually increased my income; I was more than ever respected by my friends and acquaintances; I was praised by strangers, and could lay claim to having made my name famous without much self-deception. Moreover, my mind was neither deranged nor weakened; on the contrary, I enjoyed a mental and physical strength which I have seldom found in men of my class and pursuits: I could keep up with a peasant in mowing, and could continue mental labor for ten hours at a stretch, without any evil consequences."

He turned for an explanation of the questions which destroyed his peace, to all the sources of knowledge open to him, to books and to personal intercourse with learned men. "I sought it," he says, "as a perishing man seeks safety, and I found nothing." At last he directed his study to the life of the common people, the simple, the unlearned, and the poor, and here he discovered a peace and content founded upon genuine faith, which did not exist elsewhere. He contrasted this life of sincerity and serenity with that of the rich and the learned and the distinguished with whom he had dwelt, and the latter

"not only became repulsive, but lost all meaning whatever. All our actions, our reasoning, our science and art, all appeared to me in a new light. I understood that it was all child's play, that it was useless to seek a meaning in it. The life of the working classes, of the whole of mankind, of those that create life, appeared to me in its true significance. I understood that this was life itself, and that the meaning given to this life was the true one, and I accepted it."

As Count Tolstói interprets it, the meaning of life is that man shall gain his living by labor, and that he shall not only work for himself but for all. And this creed of industry and humanity he proceeded to carry out faithfully in his daily conduct.

"I renounced the life of my own class, for I had come to confess that it was not a real life, only the semblance of one; that its superfluous luxury prevented the possibility of understanding life; and that in order to do so I must know, not an exceptional parasitic life, but the simple life of the

working classes, the life which fashions that of the world, and gives it the meaning which the working classes accept."

The faith of the people was that taught by the orthodox church, and to this Count Tolstói went back after an absence of many years. But in the very heat of his enthusiasm he was chilled by the assertion of dogmas his reason repelled. At his first communion, he says, "when I drew near the altar, and the priest called upon me to repeat that I believed that what I was about to swallow was the real body and blood, I felt a sharp pain at the heart." The bitterness of doubt and perplexity was renewed, and no peace remained until he gave up the attempt to reconcile the false and the true which were entangled inextricably in the tenets of the church. He abandoned all communion with it, and taking the Scriptures alone for his guide he found in them at last a full and perfect answer to the questions which had so long and painfully agitated him.

Appended to this confession of Count Tolstói is a short exposition of the gospel, an extract from a large manuscript work by him, the publication of which is prohibited in Russia for obvious reasons. The commentary presents "The Spirit of Christ's Teaching" as the author understands it. He does not believe in the literal inspiration of the Scriptures, but regards them as the work of many human minds which has undergone endless alterations during the passage of centuries. He sees in them "not an exclusively divine revelation, not a mere historical phenomenon, but a teaching which gives the meaning of life." His ideas, as frankly stated in the preface to the work on the Gospels, commend themselves by their liberality and moderation. They are those of a man of original mind, of great learning, of honest purpose, of endless courage, and of intense earnestness.

SARA A. HUBBARD.

#### BRIEFS ON NEW BOOKS.

THE "John Keats" of Professor Sidney Colvin (Harpers) does not fail to do credit to Mr. Morley's excellent series of biographies. It is quite what we should expect from the author of the "Landor," a volume of carefully compared and sifted biographical details and of appreciative and judicious criticism. Biographically, it was out of the question that the work should be more than a compilation or extract from the work of Forman, Lord Houghton and others. Of Forman's work, the writer says that it "might for the purpose of the student be final," and adds that he has "been indebted to it at every turn." What Professor Colvin has done, then, has been to prepare an account of Keats's life and writings less considerable in volume than Lord Houghton's memoir, embodying also the material brought to light in Forman's edition of the poet's works. Critically, the writer had no easy



task, when we consider who have been his predecessors in the same field,—Arnold, Swinburne, Palgrave, and Watts. His views are thus summed up: "From the height to which the genius of Keats arose during the brief period between its first effervescence and its exhaustion—from the glowing humanity of his own nature and the completeness with which, by the testimony alike of his own consciousness and his friends' experience, he was accustomed to live in the lives of others—from the gleams of true greatness of mind which shine not only in his poetry, but equally amid the gossip and pleasantries of his familiar letters—from all our evidences, in a word, as to what he was as well as from what he did—I think it probable that by power, as well as by temperament and aim, he was the most Shakespearean spirit that has lived since Shakespeare; the true Marcellus, as his first biographer has called him, of the realm of English song; and that in his premature death our literature has sustained its greatest loss."

MR. S. G. W. BENJAMIN, yachtsman and art-critic, poet and diplomat, has collected into a volume a number of stray stories and sketches relating to life on the ocean, and made a very readable book with the title "Sea-Spray, or, Facts and Fancies of a Yachtsman" (Benjamin and Bell). The stories are not of great interest, but the serious or semi-serious studies bring up the general average of interest to a high degree. "The Evolution of the American Yacht," "Steam Yachting in America" and "Light-houses of Old" contain much curious material, and are written with a very wide knowledge of the subjects of which they treat. "The Transatlantic Railway" is an account of the construction of a railway across the Atlantic, something which it seems may be reckoned as at least among the bare possibilities of the future, although it would be a future in which many of the fancies of Jules Verne would have quite as good a chance of realization. Perhaps the most interesting sketch of all is that called "A Cruise in a Pilot Boat." Every ocean traveller must be more or less curious to know something about the American pilot system, and this spirited account of a two weeks' cruise in a pilot boat tells just what kind of a life is led upon those little yachts whose sails with their big numbers are so welcome a sight as the transatlantic passage draws to a close.

A NEW and comparatively inexpensive edition of Rossetti's "Dante and his Circle" (Roberts Brothers) will place that invaluable series of translations within the reach of a large number of readers. It is an exact reprint of the edition of 1874. It is, of course, one of those books which no one who cares in the least for literature can afford to do without. The incomparable translation of the "Vita Nuova," one of the best translations ever made of anything, is the most valuable of its contents, although hardly exceeding in interest, and not at all exceeding in perfection of workmanship, the translations of the minor poems of Dante, and of the poems of Guido Cavalcanti, Cino da Pistoja, Cecco Angiolieri, and the long list of sonnet and canzone writers antecedent to the great poet. Rossetti was probably the only man who ever lived and wrote the English language who could have done this work; it affords a striking illustration of the rare conjunction of a difficult task and entire fitness for

its performance; and it is not the least among the many titles which Rossetti has to the grateful recollection of his adoptive countrymen. The prose introductions to the two sections of the work are, although brief, of the greatest critical value, as is, in fact, every one of the few precious pages of prose criticism which Rossetti has left us.

THE new volume of "Obiter Dicta" (Scribner) opens with the confession that one of the most charming essays in the earlier volume—that on Falstaff—was the work of Mr. George Radford, and not of Mr. Birrell. It was introduced, the author suggests, to enable him to enjoy the pleasure of reading and re-reading the volume which contained it. The new volume of essays has all the charm and possibly a little more than the solidity of the old. It includes eleven essays, two of which—on Milton and Pope—are said to be printed for the first time; most of the others will be found already familiar by readers of the reviews of recent years. That the essays are delightful reading goes without saying. That felicitous delicacy of touch which carries with it so much of serious purpose is possessed by few living writers in the degree in which Mr. Birrell is fortunate enough to possess it. To begin one of his easy conversational papers is at least to read it uninterruptedly to the end, and probably to finish the volume at the same sitting, which is done without the faintest suspicion on the reader's part that he has been buttonholed all the time by an incorrigible literary hobbyist.

#### TOPICS IN LEADING PERIODICALS.

OCTOBER, 1887.

America Europeanizing. J. C. Adams. *Forum*.  
Aristocracy and Humanity. T. Davidson. *Forum*.  
Bayoux of the South. Rebecca H. Davis. *Harper*.  
Bluebird, The. Olive Thorne Miller. *Atlantic*.  
Books that Have Helped Me. Jeannette L. Gilder. *Forum*.  
Boyhoud, Savagery of. John Johnson, Jr. *Pop. Science*.  
Caverns. N. S. Shaler. *Scribner*.  
Christian Doctrine. A. H. Wilcox. *Andover*.  
Church and State in U. S. Philip Schaff. *Mag. Am. Hist.*  
Clay, Henry. *Atlantic*.  
Color-Blindness among R. R. Employés. Susan F. Cooper. *Atlantic*.  
Cooper, Fenimore, in Europe. Susan F. Cooper. *Atlantic*.  
Costa Rica. W. E. Curtis. *Harper*.  
Democratic Rule, Continuance of. J. G. Carlisle. *Forum*.  
Dutch West India Company. *Mag. Am. History*.  
Economic Disturbances since '73. D. A. Wells. *Pop. Sci.*  
Education and Lawlessness. F. D. Huntington. *Forum*.  
Emerson. E. G. Johnson. *Dial*.  
Emerson, J. H. Ward. *Andover*.  
Emerson's Genius. *Atlantic*.  
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Howells, Wm. D. L. R. McCabe. *Lippincott*.  
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Municipal Government. G. Bradford. *Scribner*.  
Our Hundred Days in Europe. O. W. Holmes. *Atlantic*.  
Paris School of Fine Arts. H. O. Avery. *Scribner*.  
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Roman Church, Anathema of. E. J. V. Huiginn. *Forum*.  
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Scheele, Carl Wilhelm. *Popular Science*.  
Shakespeare, Onsting. R. A. Proctor. *Forum*.  
Social Sustenance. H. J. Philpott. *Popular Science*.



Thackeray Letters. *Scribner*.  
 Thought, Science of. Paul Shorey. *Dial*.  
 Title-bats. *Popular Science*.  
 Tolstol, Confessions of. Sara A. Hubbard. *Dial*.  
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 Webster, Daniel. S. G. W. Benjamin. *Mag. Am. History*.  
 Williams College, Society at. J. R. McDonald. *Lippincott*.  
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## BOOKS OF THE MONTH.

[The following list contains all New Books, American and Foreign, received during the month of September by MESSRS. A. C. McCLURG & Co., Chicago.]

## BIOGRAPHY—HISTORY.

- A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. By James E. Cabot. 2 vols., 8mo. Gilt tops. *Portrait*. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$3.50.  
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*Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, and the English Romantic School. By Alois Brandl. English Edition by Lady Eastlake (assisted by the author). Post 8vo, pp. 392. *Portrait*. London. *Net*, \$4.20.  
*Patrick Henry*. By Moses Coit Tyler. 16mo, pp. 398. Gilt top. "American Statesmen." Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$1.25.  
*Life of John Coleridge Patteson*. Missionary Bishop of the Melanesian Islands. By Charlotte M. Yonge. Fifth edition, somewhat abridged. 2 vols., 12mo. *Portrait*. Macmillan & Co. \$5.00.  
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*England Under the Angevin Kings*. By Kate Norgate. With Maps and Plans. 2 vols., 8vo. Macmillan & Co. \$9.00.  
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